



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

"Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and showing on the part of the builder or building-committee either an utter want of appreciation of the uses of ornament or a pitiful poverty of invention in him who could design such supporters for the altar of a Christian church.

Truly it is time to ask, "what constitutes Christian Art?" when such annoying evidences of its misapprehension meet us at every turn, and more especially when we see such blunders as the above looked upon every day by hundreds of people, without exciting a word of comment or surprise—without its being even suspected that there is anything in them capable of emendation, much less that they are most grossly servile in spirit, misplaced in their uses, and much more illustrative of native ignorance than of "Christian Art."

SNOW.

Light, and still, and soft,
Flake after flake comes down,
Dimming the air aloft,
Flecking the oak-boles brown;
Light as the fall of years
On a head grown white in peace;
Light as the breath of the angel Death
When he whispereth of release.

White, and calm, and cold,
Under a sunset sky
Glowing with red, aerial gold,
The unstained snow-drifts lie.
Calm as the pulseless dead
In the grave-niche, cold and white.
With a kindling glow on each marble brow—
A glory of love and light.

Pure, and soft, and still,
Drifting down to the sea,
Melt the snows of the pearl-white hill
Into sunshine, silently.
Blue are the depths above,
Deep is the blue below,
White from the bay glides a sail away—
And a soul passed, white as snow.

LEOY LARCOM.

THE greatest error of all the rest is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or farthest end of knowledge; for men have entered with a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity, and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession, and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men: as if there were sought in knowledge a couch, whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground, for strife and contention; or a shop, for profit or sale; and not a rich store-house, for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate.—*Lord Bacon.*

SAPPHO, THE GREEK POETESS.

THOUGH woman has, in modern times, been the subject of much serious and learned discussion, though she has been as much overrated by some as she has been underrated by others; though the young, enthusiastic, and erotic have saluted her as more than angel, and the old, prosaic, and heartless have degraded her to the condition of an animal, yet no secure step has been taken to give her a more satisfactory position in family and social life. She is yet the creature of accident, of varying circumstances, and constantly oscillating between a thing of use and abuse, between the wild idealities of the unbridled imagination and the sober realities of the well-balanced mind. As a creature of affluence, she has but little moral anchorage, is but the plaything of fashion, folly, and idleness, and is seldom engaged in elevating her own position, or in making that of man more desirable. As a creature of poverty, she is immersed in toil, dirt, and rags, and often becomes the victim of passions which efface her sex, and render her not only loathsome, but the vilest thing upon earth. These extremes mark the history of woman in every generation, and exhibit as little reliance in man, when he worships her as the gilded toy of fashion and wealth, as when he despises her as the victim of indigence and degradation.

As we regard man and woman as complementary of each other, and in no way as independent factors, all discussions as to the superiority of the one to the other are vicious and misplaced, and can issue in nothing but confusion. As distinct individualities they have no meaning—so far as families and social life is concerned—and very little even as elements of psychological study. The struggle of individualities for independent rights and liberties disturb the harmony of family and social life, and is often fraught with political and civil discords. If every right is held by a corresponding duty, and if both are only susceptible of rational explanation relatively, it is folly to separate, in our studies, the correlatives which all society and civilization involve. Right and duty are moral terms, imply moral relationship, and have nothing to do with physical relationship. Sophistical barbarism may deprive the brute creation of their rights, but never of the duties which humanity owes them, and when these duties are discharged by the latter, the former has all the rights to which it is entitled. The moment two individuals are wrought conjugally into family life, a host of complex relationships springs up, having moral rights and duties of a very serious nature, but in no way connected with the physical ties which they materially import. The confusion of physical with moral notions, on the part of parents and children, with regard to their reciprocal relationships, has often poisoned their finest feelings, and led to the most unreasonable superstitions, has darkened their judgments, misdirected their duties, and led to grave acts of injustice. Whenever we shall have an enlightened recognition of our moral duties, our family and social relationships are destined to undergo great and important changes, are destined to become more just, more

harmonious, and more in keeping with a true normal state of things. At present, our confusion of thought leads to confusion of action, which issues in general anarchy, both as regards our family and social obligations. Our frequent appeals to the civil laws touching these matters bear painful evidence to our spiritual deficiency and impotency, and keep society in a constant state of excitement and warfare. There is not a will made or broken, there is not a divorce or separation effected, there is not, in short, a family or social confusion of any kind which does not disclose a state of moral depravity, either active or passive, as shocking to true moral sensibility as it is pernicious to general well-being. Moral sterility overspreads the whole family and social landscape, and every figure on the social canvas is fearfully stamped with the bartering, trafficking, and huckstering demon lying at the bottom of almost every man's and woman's soul. Believing that a vital sense of our own present imperfect condition is the best preparation for a sound judgment, as regards the past condition of our ancestors, we have thought it prudent to preface what we have to say of Sappho with a brief outline of our own family and social state, which must be familiar, in all its painful details, to any one who has read the newspapers for the last twelve months. And even these newspaper details, however nauseous, are but the fitful shadows of an April day on the social dial-plate; they are not the cardinal, nor even the ordinal figures, which would require a violently fundamental condescension to force them up.

About a century before the beginning of authentic history, the island of Lesbos was destined to become the birthplace of a woman whose reputation became nationally Grecian, only that it might become universal. With the fruits of her genius time has dealt very harshly, there being but a few fragments of her poetical productions left us, and these, with the exception of her celebrated lines to Venus, look like the broken and scattered leaves of an autumnal tree. Even these were neglected, until it fell to the glorious lot of conscientious Germany to gather them up—together with much other neglected Grecian thought—and give them a substantial form of perpetuity. It may be truly said, that it has been in the deep, broad, and expansive mind of Germany that neglected Grecian thought and culture have found a becoming resurrection and life, and that through its toilsome labors and untiring research, a thing of beauty in antiquity has become a joy forever to modern times. After Ursinus, in 1568, we believe that Wolf, a German, was the first, in 1734, to give a complete edition of Sappho's remains, and, as a natural consequence, since that time her life and poetry have become an interesting theme of learned research and speculation. Out of the sybaritic condition of women in Greece, nine authoresses had natural and poetic power enough to transmit their names to posterity. At the head of these, Sappho is paramount. Anterior to these, women manifested their influence, as far as we know, as sibyls, prophetesses, and pythonesses. But the poetic afflatus, once spontaneously kindled in Sappho's

breast, has been transmitted to many women during successive centuries, until now we have as many women to write poetry as to rock the cradle or adjust the baby-jumper. We have few facts, not apocryphal, wherewith to weave together the biography of Sappho. She was born, however, had three brothers, praised one for his good qualities, condemned the other for his carnalities, and was silent as to the third. She married a man of wealth—just as all our modern damsels would like to do—named Cercola, by whom she had a daughter. Death soon severed this family bond, and left her a widow. But the void in her heart, if any, was soon filled up by the muse, who henceforth became her solitary companion, wandering through her thoughts by day, and filling, like midnight stars, her dreams by night. Taking up her lyre as a birth-right gift, she wildly, madly struck its trembling chords that they might tearfully beat in unison with the conflicting and torturing emotions of her troubled soul. With the birth of poetry came the birth of love—for remember, good reader, they are never disunited if they have their source in the heart—and the expression of her interior life, which will find a hearty echo through every age,

———Spirat adhuc amor,
Vivuntque commisi calores
Æolæ fîdibus puellæ.

The ideal of woman is a fatal gift if not swallowed up in a corresponding reality. On the wing of abstraction they can mount for a moment, but if kept aloft, they pine away with the loneliness of their condition, and sigh aloud to plunge into the concrete. Husband, children, and home are the three great elements of that fulcrum upon which alone a woman can securely base her own happiness, and upon which she can elevate that of others. She has no life apart, no individual life, no life upon the arid wings of the intellect, but in the depths of her own pure soul are many chambers, in affluently opening which to others, she is made eternally happy herself. In the garden of the Hesperides may hang many golden apples, but if too far from the sight and touch of woman, they may hang in vain, for between the too remote reality of the past and the too distant reality of the future it is her destiny to die.

To tradition we must turn for the saddest event in Sappho's life. While her affections were poetically creeping over the vibrating cords of her lyre, they were gathered together, and concentrated upon the handsome Phaon, in whom poor Sappho found a flesh and blood reality of her own ideal, a home for her own wandering, restless and distracted heart. But in the masculine soul of Phaon was neither love, pity, nor sympathy for the broken-hearted Sappho. Either he came cold out of the mould of nature, or the debaucheries of a Grecian life had strangled every generous impulse of his soul. With Sappho there were but two alternatives, either to die or to possess his affections. The latter becoming impossible, she ended her life and her woes by precipitating herself from the Leucadian Rock, thus coupling terrestrial suffering, sorrowing, and death

with the fatal dowry of a gifted intellect, a high wrought soul, and an affectionate heart.

It is not our province to canvas the conflicting facts of Sappho's life, or the conflicting opinions which have been put forth by the leading authorities on the subject. If over two thousand years have closed up all avenues to the general historical facts and circumstances of Sappho's times, it would be losing time to try and glean up the particularities of her life, and give them that natural order and truthful sequence which alone should justify us in giving a final judgment as to her character and position. Could we sum up all the facts and circumstances pertaining to the lives of the nine poetesses of Greece, it is likely we should have a base of family and social enlightenment as regards antiquity, which would be as romantically interesting as it would be philosophically instructive. But even in our own times little is known of those who pass their days in retirement, away from material strifes and struggles, from politics and public affairs, and who love to cultivate the graces and charities of life, and whose whole ambition is confined to the faithful and modest discharge of their duties to themselves and to others. Of these the world is ever unmindful while living, and ever forgetful when dead; and it is only the bold in spirit, the daring in deed, and the stranger to modesty and sensibility, that hold their heads above the Lethæan stream of time, and stamp their names upon the naturally forgetful memories of men. But when we regard the individual as he really is, but the fleeting thing of time, place, and circumstances, and that it is to society alone he belongs, and not to himself, properly understood, we are not surprised that he is lost sight of in the vast social edifice wherewith it is his destiny to be amalgamated and immersed.

If the poetess of Lesbos is an enigma to erudite curiosity, she is not the less a woman of a warm poetic temperament, of great lyric power, of voluptuous, passionate yearnings, and of many moral short-comings. Had we a true knowledge of her ancestors, of her family education, and of the social atmosphere in which she lived, we could easily account for her virtues as well as her weaknesses; and as the best women are dowered with both, we presume that Sappho had her share of them.

The human soul in the days of paganism required a poetical outlet for all its varied emotions, for its intoxicating joys and its melancholy forebodings, quite as much, if not more, than in our days. The bloom or decay of eternal nature was married in Greece to the bloom or the decay of the heart's affections or hopes. In the Danaë of Simonides we have the highest expression of the tenderest pathos and affection; and in the ode to her Beloved, by Sappho, we have the loftiest outburst of passion left us by time. To use the language of another, "It has made Sappho a name of power among men—a point of solitary glory in our backward view—the gauge and boundary mark of woman's genius to the world's end. To have shrouded the keenest appetite in the tenderest passion, and to have articulated

the pulses of sensation in syllables that burn, and in a measure that breathes, and flutters, and swoons away—to have done this, is to have written these immortal verses. The identical words are of the essence of the work; flashing the soul of the poet upon the reader in a hue of its own—they are not to be spelled out as mere grammatical signs. They are as echoes of unseen and unheard strokes—drops from the heart. They *are* very Sappho. You may render the sense, but you cannot translate the feeling;—you cannot approach so near, even as Pindar, who stands also aloof and inaccessible to modern touch; and all that ever yet has been done is little more than notice to the unlearned reader, that some such thoughts, in some such order, were the production of a pagan poetess between two and three thousand years ago."

It is alone the prerogative of great genius to linger, through ages, in loving companionship with the children of men, to invigorate their thoughts, and to freshen their feelings. To the cultivated young, as well as the aged of our day, Sappho is still a source of delight and admiration—a flower of poetical beauty, and a symbol of saddened and blighted affections. The music of her lyre and the rose-like fragrance of her wasted feelings—the dark shadows of her short and chequered life—the mournful nature and the afflicting circumstances of her death, come like a cortège of phantoms from the tomb of the past.

HEAVEN, earth, ocean, the universe, are replete with the materials of imagination and thought; but all remain barren to a barren genius. A fertile or poetic mind clothes every object with a thousand borrowed ideas and associations, while an ordinary mind sees in everything only its naked self. To such a one, the more subtle and intellectual species of relations are somewhat as a landscape painted on canvas would be to the sense of touch, suggesting but the notion of a smooth, flat surface; or as a composition in Chinese or Arabic, which to a person acquainted with the language might awaken a succession of pleasing or pathetic images would appear to another who beholds in the piece nothing but an assemblage of grotesque and unintelligible characters. Wordsworth has finely depicted an unsuspensive, prosaic spirit of this cast:

"A primrose by a river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

No doubt a large proportion of mankind live and die without having their interior vision opened, or experiencing a momentary touch of refined sensibility or enthusiasm. What a beautiful and moving picture is often presented in the scenery of the clouds! Yet, to the generality, all these gorgeous and magnificent appearances are utterly lost, because the faculties are so debased and sophisticated. On the other hand, were an affluent genius restricted to the meagre particulars of a common dictionary, it would discover abundant scope for reflection, and even for the exercise of fancy. It is the prerogative of natures of this class to give rather than take, resembling in effect the prism, under whose action the simplest element assumes the most exquisite combination of hues.—*Chilow.*